

## **Michael Rich, M.D., M.P.H.**

Dr. Michael Rich, assistant professor of pediatrics at Harvard Medical School and assistant professor of society, human development and health at Harvard School of Public Health, came to medicine after a 12-year career as a filmmaker (including serving as assistant director to Akira Kurosawa on *Kagemusha*); his current areas of health research and clinical work bring together his experience and expertise in medicine and media. Cognizant of the potency of the image and of the primacy of media as a source of information and influence, Dr. Rich studies media as a force that powerfully affects child health and health behavior and uses it as a tool for medical research, education, health care policy, and patient advocacy.

Graduating from Pomona College where he double majored in English and film in 1977, he attended Harvard Medical School (M.D., 1991) and Harvard School of Public Health (M.P.H., 1997). Bringing his media expertise to bear on the issue of child health, Dr. Rich developed and directs Video Intervention/Prevention Assessment (VIA), a research methodology in which patients who share a medical diagnosis or health risk factor make video diaries of their lives, visual illness narratives that are studied for factors in their day-to-day activities and environments that contribute to their condition. Based on studies using VIA to research how kids really experience asthma, obesity, and other chronic medical conditions, Dr. Rich has authored numerous research papers, including the first video-illustrated paper ever published by *Pediatrics*.

In 1998, Dr. Rich received the New Investigator Award from the Society for Adolescent Medicine for his development of VIA and the research resulting from it. He also received the Holroyd-Sherry Award in 2005 from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) for his contributions to children, adolescents and the media. Dr. Rich received five years of funding from the NICHD to further refine the VIA method in a longitudinal study of young people with disabling conditions as they transition to the adult health care system. In addition, Dr. Rich wrote and co-produced a short film starring Danny DeVito and Nia Long that used humor and drama to educate and empower children and adolescents to take control of asthma. Dr. Rich has an established reputation for investigating the negative health effects of media exposure, having authored research papers examining the portrayals of interpersonal violence and substance use in music videos, and several chapters in key texts. Dr. Rich has been elected a member of the prestigious Society for Pediatric Research, a Fellow of the Society for Adolescent Medicine, and a Fellow of the AAP. He has authored communications to the AAP membership on media issues, including policy statements on media violence and a well-publicized 1999 AAP policy statement on media education as a public health intervention. Dr. Rich has served as a member of the AAP media leadership group, the Committee on Public Education, and has authored and presented testimony to the U.S. Congress and other legislative bodies. Most recently, he testified before committees of the Illinois and North Carolina State Legislatures about the impacts of video games on children's health. Dr. Rich was a contributing author of the Children and Media Research Advancement (CAMRA) bill introduced by Senators Hillary Clinton, Sam Brownback, and Joe Lieberman and currently making its way through both houses of congress.